

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4079
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0217

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LY, EG
SUBJ: EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN RELATIONS

REF: CAIRO 2552

SUMMARY: RELATIVE LULL IN EXCHANGE OF LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN
PROPAGANDA TIRADES ENDED FOR LIBYANS AFTER POPULAR
DEMONSTRATIONS IN EGYPT JAN 18-19. LOCAL MEDIA
INCREASINGLY EMPHASIZING ALLEGED CORRUPTION OF
SADAT'S REGIME. RADIO BROADCASTS APPEAL TO EGYPTIAN
STUDENTS TO OVERTHROW SADAT. LANGUAGE OF EDITORIALS
SUGGEST LIBYA MAY AGAIN ATTEMPT TO SPONSOR TERRORIST
ACTIVITY IN EGYPT. END SUMMARY.

1. RELATIVE LULL IN THE EXCHANGE OF TIRADES BETWEEN
LIBYA AND EGYPT HAS CLEARLY COME TO A HALT ON THE
LIBYAN SIDE SINCE THE JAN. 18-19 POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS
AND RIOTS IN EGYPT. DURING THE PAST FORTNIGHT, LIBYA'S
GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MEDIA HAS GIVEN EXTENSIVE
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COVERAGE TO EGYPT'S CIVIL UNREST. NEWS COVERAGE
REFERS TO REPORTS OF INTERNATIONAL AND ARAB NEWS
AGENCIES, YET MEDIA EDITORIALS HAVE INCESSANTLY
CRITICIZED PRESIDENT SADAT'S PERSON AND GOVERNMENT
POLICIES.

2. WHILE PRESS PROPAGANDA IS FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION,

RADIO BROADCASTS ARE CLEARLY AIMED AT INCITING EGYPTIAN STUDENT POPULATION TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THEIR GOVERNMENT. LIBYAN BROADCAST OF FEB. 14 MADE THIS APPEAL TO STUDENTS IN THE NAME OF THE "PROGRESSIVE REVOLUTIONARY FRONT OF EGYPT." FIRST REFERENCE TO EXISTENCE OF ALLEGED FRONT APPEARED FEB. 12 DURING BROADCAST IN WHICH FRONT CONDEMNED SADAT AND DECLARED THAT THE "REVOLUTIONARY PATH HAS BECOME THE ONLY MEANS FOR LIBERATING EGYPT FROM SADAT'S LACKEY REGIME." SUBSEQUENT FEB 14, BROADCAST MADE A SIMILAR APPEAL.

COMMENT: RENEWED LIBYAN PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST SADAT IS MORE VITROLIC THAN THAT OF LAST YEAR. DIRECT RADIO APPEALS IN THE NAME OF "PROGRESSIVE LIBERATION FRONT OF EGYPT" SUGGESTS QADHAFI VIEWS EGYPTIAN CIVIL DISTURBANCES AND THEIR AFTERMATH OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AS PERHAPS THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO STRIKE AT SADAT'S APPARENTLY WEAKENED REGIME.

IN RESPONSE TO EMB CAIRO'S INQUIRY (REFTEL) CONCERNING THE "PROGRESSIVE LIBERATION FRONT OF EGYPT," WE HAVE NO INFORMATION TO CONFIRM ITS EXISTENCE. THERE HAVE BEEN PREVIOUS REPORTS OF LIBYAN TERRORIST CAMPS TRAINING EGYPTIANS AND OTHER NASSERITES WHO MAY WELL HAVE ADOPTED THIS NOM DE GUERRE. YET, APPEAL TO STUDENTS TO OVERTHROW SADAT SUGGESTS FRONT'S STRENGTH LITTLE MORE THAN THAT OF VOICE OF LOCAL RADIO BROADCASTER.

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